Wilma A. Lewis, Inspector General
Audrey Urbanczyk, Bureau Editor

Record Settlement for Off-Shore Oil Violation

An investigation conducted by the Office of Inspector General culminated in a civil settlement in which Chevron USA, Inc., agreed to pay $1,165,000 for violating provisions of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. The civil penalty is the largest ever assessed for a violation of the Act, according to **Kurt Zimmerman**, the assistant U.S. attorney of the Central District of California, who negotiated the settlement on behalf of the Federal Government.

"It sends a very strong message that these types of violations, which have the potential to threaten health and safety as well as to result in substantial harm to the environment, cannot and should not be left uncorrected, " said **Inspector General Wilma A. Lewis**.

The investigation began when an employee of the Department provided information indicating that Chevron knowingly operated its Grace Oil Drilling Platform in the Pacific Ocean near Ventura, California, with nonfunctioning surface controlled subsurface safety valves. These valves are designed to prevent blowouts (uncontrolled, dangerous flows of oil and natural gas) and are considered to be the most important safety feature on an offshore oil platform. Special Agent **Anna Sandoval-Ryan**, of OIG's Sacramento Field Office, conducted the investigation, which is part of an OIG environmental initiative.

Three Sentenced for $1 Million Theft

Confronted with escalating commercial insurance costs, the Leech Lake Band of Chippewa Indians located in Cass Lake, Minnesota, decided to establish a self-insurance program to provide general liability and worker's compensation insurance coverage to its employees. This program was authorized by tribal resolution and approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Band reasoned that they would save millions of dollars by avoiding the high premiums charged by commercial insurance companies.

An attorney who was a member of the Band was selected to draft the documents necessary to implement the program. Contrary to the Band's intentions, the attorney prepared documents creating an entity in which the attorney had an interest and allowed the attorney, business associates, and their spouses to convert monies deposited into the self-insurance fund to personal use. The Office of Inspector General investigation determined that from 1985 through 1990, a group chartered by the Band to manage the self-insurance program had converted about $1 million to its own use.

The attorney (who was elected to the Minnesota State Senate in 1994), the Band's Tribal Chairman, and the Band's Secretary-Treasurer were indicted and convicted in the District of Minnesota of multiple criminal charges, including conspiracy, mail fraud, and theft. The attorney was sentenced to 57 months of imprisonment, three years of supervised release, and 600 hours of community service. The attorney was also ordered to pay $25,600 in fines and $400,000 in restitution to the tribe.

Following his conviction, the attorney resigned from the Senate, and his license to practice law was suspended. The chairman, who resigned from his position, was sentenced to 33 months of imprisonment and two years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay $150 in fines and $66,440 in restitution to the tribe. The secretary-treasurer was sentenced to 12 months of home detention and two years of probation, and was ordered to pay $7,500 in fines and $31,412 in restitution to the tribe. **Special Agent James V. Hanbury** of OIG's Rapid City, South Dakota, Field Office, conducted the investigation.

Former Computer Specialist Sentenced

A former computer specialist employed by a consulting firm performing management services for the U.S. Virgin Islands Government on St. Thomas was sentenced in March 1997 for fraudulently awarding a computer procurement contract to a business in which he had a financial interest. The consulting firm was assisting the local government in managing the construction of public works projects undertaken to rebuild the infrastructure in the Virgin Islands following Hurricane Hugo. In 1989, the consulting firm solicited bids from companies for the purchase of computer hardware and software to be used by the consulting firm in its management functions for the Government.

A computer specialist for the consulting firm acted as a procurement official for this contract, soliciting bids from 11 companies, including a firm in which he had a financial interest. The computer specialist subsequently awarded the contract to the highest bidder (which was the company in which he had an interest). This company received more than $200,000 from the government under this contract. During the entire procurement process, the computer specialist concealed his ownership in the company from the consulting firm.

In July 1995, a federal grand jury charged the computer specialist with wire fraud in connection with the scheme. The former employee pled guilty in April 1996 and in March 1997 was sentenced in the U.S. District Court, St. Thomas, to 15 months imprisonment and was ordered to pay $9,000 in restitution. **Special Agent Vincent C. Chapman, Jr**., of OIG's Eastern Division Office of Investigations in Arlington, Virginia, conducted the investigation.

Business Owner Pleads Guilty to Bribery

A joint investigation conducted by the Office of Inspector General-Federal Bureau of Investigation resulted in the conviction of a businessman in the U.S. Territory of Guam in connection with the bribery of an undercover FBI agent posing as a U.S. Department of Labor official. Labor's Wage and Hour Division had assessed a $300,000 fine against the businessman in connection with various wage and hour violations. The businessman paid a $26,000 bribe to the undercover agent in an attempt to obtain a reduction of the wage and hour fine. The businessman pled guilty to an information charging bribery of a public official. On December 18, 1996, the man was sentenced in the U.S. District Court, Agana, Guam, to six months of home confinement, three years of probation, and 750 hours of community service. He was also ordered to make restitution in the amount of $300,000 and was fined $12,050. **Special Agent Loren L. Harris** of OIG's Agana, Guam, Field Office, conducted the investigation.

Duncan Named Special Agent-in-Charge for Western Division of Investigations

Inspector General Wilma A. Lewis recently announced the selection of **James F. Duncan** as Special Agent-in-Charge of the Western Division of Investigations in Lakewood, Colorado. Duncan replaces **Don Wiseman**, who recently left the Office to join the Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General.

Duncan began his law enforcement career as a ranger with the National Park Service, followed by his appointment as an investigator with the Office of Personnel Management. He joined the Department of the Interior's OIG in 1983 as a Special Agent, distinguishing himself in the conduct of complex investigations involving public corruption, conflict of interest, embezzlement, bribery, and fraud in federal programs.

During the past five years, he served as the assistant special agent-in-charge/team leader and, since July 1996, as acting special agent-in-charge of the Eastern Division. A native of Salina, Kansas, Duncan has a Bachelor of Science degree in English education and a Master of Arts degree in English literature from Northern Arizona University. His OIG awards include the Distinguished Service Award and the Inspector General's Superior Service Award.

Vision Statement

Inspectors General are agents of positive change, striving for continuous improvement in federal agencies' management and program operations and in their own offices. That is the Vision Statement adopted in January 1994 by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency and the Executive Council on Integrity and Efficiency.


Wilma A. Lewis

It is the vision guiding the Office of Inspector General as it pursues its statutory mission to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse and to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in Department and U.S. insular area programs and operations. In accomplishing this, the OIG conducts both proactive and joint audit efforts in the Department and insular areas.

"These efforts are being conducted in our desire to serve as a catalyst for positive change and to continue our efforts to accomplish the Government's reinvention goals," said **Inspector General Wilma A. Lewis**. These audit efforts consist of identifying areas of potential vulnerabilities, providing

Guides Auditing

audit services during early stages of program development, and providing technical assistance to Interior bureaus and offices and insular areas to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their programs and operations. Recent proactive and joint efforts have included:

Improving Financial Management. The OIG performed audits of the financial statements of bureaus and offices, as required by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990. As a result of the combined efforts of OIG auditors and bureau and Departmental personnel, the OIG issued unqualified opinions on the audits of the financial statements of five Interior agencies for the 6-month period ending March 31, 1997. Those agencies were: the Minerals Management Service (MMS), the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), the Office of the Secretary, and the Bureau of Land Management. The OIG reported that the internal accounting controls of MMS, OSM, OIA, and the Office of the Secretary met the required internal control objectives and that there were no material instances of noncompliance with provisions of laws and regulations that were tested. Audit work on the financial statements of the remaining bureaus and the Department continues.

Cooperating With the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Under a cooperative agreement, the OIGs of FEMA and Interior, with participation from the U.S. Virgin Islands Bureau of Audit and Control, conducted reviews of accounting controls, procurement practices, and grant administration procedures of various agencies of the Virgin Islands Government. These proactive reviews were conducted in anticipation of the receipt by the Virgin Islands Government of FEMA-approved disaster grants in the aftermath of Hurricane Marilyn, which struck the Virgin Islands on September 15, 1995. As a result of the effort,13 audit reports were issued that included recommendations to improve control of the grants.

Audits Office Reorganized

The Inspector General's Office of Audits was recently reorganized to streamline and improve the efficiency of the audit report process and to build on the "one organization concept," according to Inspector General Wilma A. Lewis.

Under the reorganization, the Audits organization was changed from a regional office structure to an Audit Directorate structure, with each directorate responsible for specific Interior bureaus, programs, or activities. Each directorate is headed by an Audit Director. To ensure accomplishment of the day-to-day administrative activities, a senior auditor-in-charge was designated for each field location.

The areas of responsibility and the respective Audit Directors are as follows:

Financial and financial-related audits (including financial statement audits): Neal Littlefield at (202) 208-5725.

Insular area audits: Arnold van Beverhoudt in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, at (809) 774-8300.

Performance audits for the Bureau of Land Management and the Minerals Management Service: Alan Klein in Lakewood, Colorado, at (303) 236-9243.

Performance audits for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Office of the Secretary: Roger La Rouche at (202) 208-5520.

Performance audits for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement: Andrew Fedak at (202) 208-55520).

External audits (contracts, single audits, and indirect cost negotiations): Charlotte Olson at (202) 208-5484.

Special projects (including audit and strategic planning and semiannual reports): Ronald Stith at (202) 208-5726.

Top Audit Positions Filled at OIG

Robert J. Williams has been named the assistant inspector general for audits and **Ronald K. Stith** is the deputy assistant inspector general for audits. In making these two Senior Executive Service appointments, Inspector General Wilma A. Lewis said that she "looked forward to the new energy, leadership, and talent that Williams and Stith would bring to the new positions and thus, to the audit organization and the entire Office of Inspector General."


Robert J. Williams

Williams, who had been serving as acting assistant IG for audits since July 1996, began his tenure with the Department's OIG in 1986, when he joined the Western Region staff in Sacramento, California, as the regional audit manager. His previous positions were with the U.S. Army Audit Agency and the Department of Defense OIG, where for 13 years he rose steadily through the ranks and was recognized on several occasions for his conduct and supervision of highly visible, sensitive, and complex audits.


Ronald K. Stith

On joining Interior, Williams continued to distinguish himself through his able management, supervision, and leadership of a regional office responsible for a variety of tasks, including the conduct of contract audits, the negotiation of indirect cost rates, and the conduct of internal audits. In recognition of his outstanding work and invaluable contributions as the Western Regional Audit Manager, he received several awards, including the Inspector General's Superior Service Award and the Inspector General's Distinguished Service Award.

Williams, a native of Pleasantville, New Jersey, has a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting (*magna cum laude*) from Monmouth College in West Long Branch, New Jersey, and a Master in Business Administration (with honors) from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Rutherford, New Jersey. Willliams also played professional baseball, softball, and basketball.

Since July 1996, Stith had been on a one-year Intergovernmental Personnel Assignment with the District of Columbia OIG as the assistant IG for audits. He began his professional career in 1978 with the accounting firm of Arthur Andersen and Company. In 1980, he joined the Department of Energy's OIG, where he served for the next 10 years as a senior auditor and later as an audit director.

In 1990, as director of Program Inspections, he successfully managed and directed the review of complex Energy Department programs covering weapons research, environmental management, energy conservation, and nuclear weapons testing, as well as functional areas such as finance, procurement, property, human resource management, and telecommunications. For his outstanding performance while at Energy, Stith received numerous awards, including Auditor of the Year; Special Act, Superior Performance, and Sustained Outstanding Performance Awards; and Energy's Exceptional Service Award.

A native of Sterling, Virginia, Stith has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in accounting and a Master in Business Administration from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He is a certified public accountant, certified fraud examiner, and certified government financial manager.

Chinese Delegation Visits

A delegation of auditors and inspectors general from the People's Republic of China visited the Office of the Inspector General for a briefing on the Department's IG activities and functions. The April 4 visit was the first by a Chinese delegation to the OIG. **Inspector General Wilma A. Lewis** welcomed the 14-member group, which consisted of Inspectors General and Chief Auditing Officers of various ministries of the central government of China.

With the assistance of a translator, the Delegation was briefed on how OIG functions within the Department and within the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government. The briefing also explained OIG's mission, structure, and legislative authority as well as the types of audits conducted by the OIG and the process of conducting audits and investigations. The session concluded with a question and answer period and the delegation's expression of appreciation to the OIG participants for their hospitality. The group also visited the OIG of the Department of Transportation.

Audit Director Honored

Roger La Rouche, director of Performance Audits in the Office of Inspector General's Office of Audits, received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Secretaries of the Interior and Health and Human Services for exemplary service to Interior and HHS's Indian Self-Determination Negotiated Rulemaking Committee.

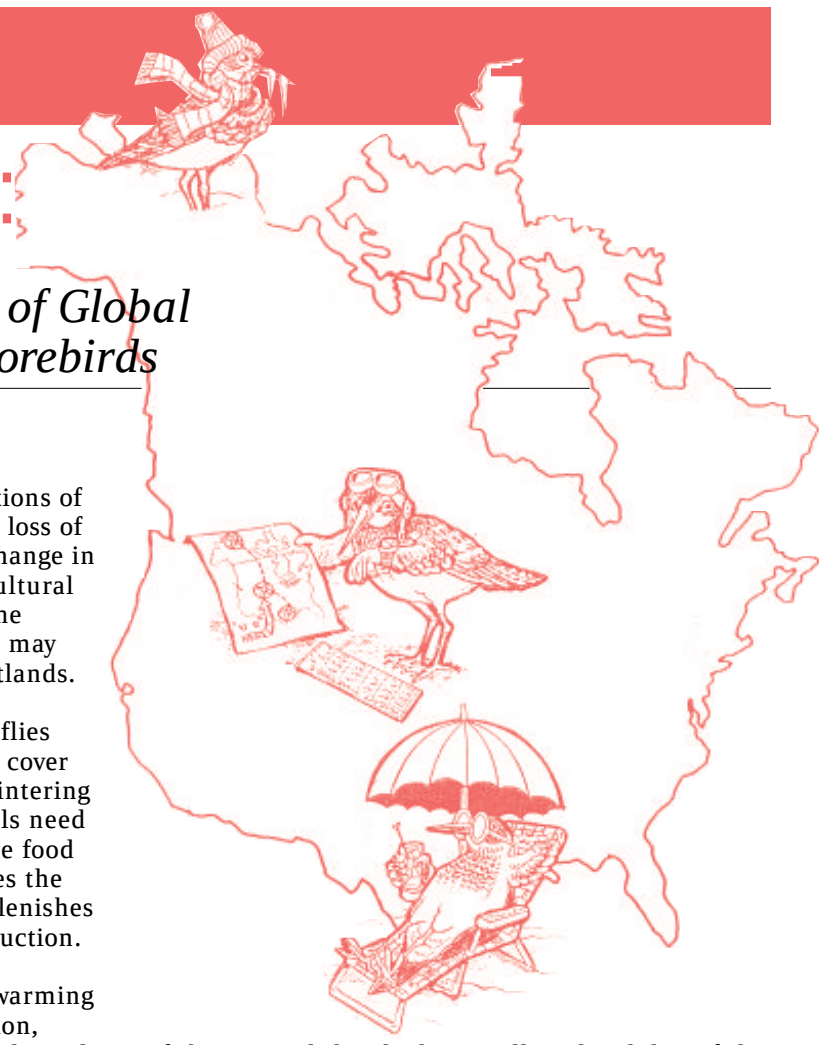
La Rouche, who is responsible for performance audits of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Office of the Secretary, was cited for his "willingness to spend long hours in developing a rule implementing the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, Public Law 93-638, as amended."

U.S. Geological Survey

Gordon Eaton, Director
Judy Fretwell and
Kathleen Gohn, Bureau Editors

Migratory Waystations:

Exploring the Impacts of Global Climate Change on Shorebirds



Gail Keirn

The most immediate threat to many populations of migratory shorebirds may be the continuing loss of stopover sites due to land use and climate change in the United States. In the Great Plains, agricultural development has eliminated 90 percent of the wetlands in some areas; and global warming may also be reducing the number and size of wetlands.

Many other animal species, including butterflies and sea turtles, make yearly migrations that cover thousands of miles between breeding and wintering grounds. To complete these journeys, animals need resting and feeding places along the way. The food provided at these stopovers not only produces the energy for continued migration but also replenishes energy reserves that are essential for reproduction.

To better understand the impacts of global warming and landscape changes on shorebird migration, researchers from the USGS Midcontinent Ecological Science Center have studied Pectoral Sandpipers over a 5-year period (1992-1996) at three stopover sites and on breeding grounds in Alaska. Body fat and-or movement data collected on more than 700 sandpipers are used by USGS researchers to develop computer simulatios.

The models help scientists assess the effects of global climate change by predicting how shorebirds' migration behavior and reproductive ability may be influenced by changes in the distribution and abundance of stopover sites. The models also develop better management options on a regional scale for the sites.

The results of the computer models, coupled with field data, show that female pectoral sandpipers significantly increase their fat reserves during spring migration as they move northward. The extra fat reserves appear to enhance the size of the egg and the chick, as well as the ability of the chick to survive. However, the female sandpipers did not significantly increase their fat reserves during drier springs when habitat was less plentiful. This may have affected their reproductive success during at least one year of the study.

If global climate change causes more dry years, scientists fear the reproductive success of shorebirds may be significantly affected. Future USGS research will use global climate change models to determine the frequency with which drier than normal years are likely to occur.

Scientists trap pectoral sandpipers in mist nets, and take a series of body and fat measurements, at top left. After measurements are taken, some birds, like the one at lower left, are fitted with 1.5 gram radio transmitters that provide data on the birds' daily movements and residency patterns.

VOLCANOES! *(In the Classroom)*

Can scientists forecast volcanic eruptions? Where do volcanoes occur and why? What are the effects of volcanoes on the Earth's system? What are the risks and benefits of living near volcanoes?

These are a few of the questions explored in the dynamic teaching packet VOLCANOES!, published by the USGS for grades 4-8.

Focusing on the Mount St. Helens eruption on May 18, 1980, students will learn how this catastrophic eruption produced ripple effects on the Earth's subsystems, causing numerous problems; they will also learn how to analyze these problems and develop solutions.

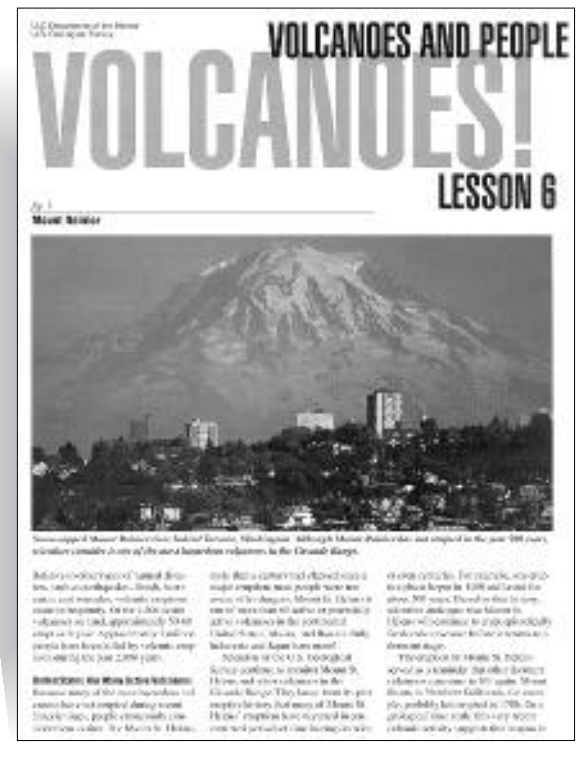
The packet includes a two-sided color poster, a teaching guide with a glossary and bibliography, six lesson plans with timed activities, and an evaluation sheet.

Although the study of volcanoes is an earth science subject, the activities in this packet incorporate various related subjects, including other sciences, social sciences, language arts, and mathematics.

To obtain VOLCANOES! and other teacher packets produced by the USGS, send requests on school letterhead addressed to USGS Information Services, Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225.

Other packets available are What Do Maps Show for grades 4-7, Global Change for grades 4-8, Map Adventures for grades K-3, and Exploring Maps for grades 9-12.

Please visit the USGS educational learning web home page at:
<URL: http://www.usgs.gov/education/>



A sample lesson plan from the VOLCANOES teaching packet is shown above, featuring Mount Rainier. Eruptions in the Cascade Mountains in the Northwest have occurred at an average rate of one to two per century during the last 4,000 years.

USGS Hosts "TOP" Customers

The USGS has launched a series of workshops for one of its largest groups of customers—topographic map users. "Our intention is to bring together a broad range of customer groups and discuss the evolution of topographic mapping and to offer an opportunity to our map users to help us guide the program into the future," said **Dick Witmer**, acting chief of the National Mapping Division. The topographic mapping program is one of the largest customer service operations that USGS handles.

Fifty topographic map users attended the first workshop on March 13 at the USGS National Center in Reston, Virginia. The one-day get-together consisted of two parts: In the morning session, USGS senior managers gave formal presentations on policy and operations aspects of the topographic mapping program; and a member of the American Association of State Geologists, a major customer for topographic maps, gave a presentation entitled A User's Perspective.

The afternoon was devoted to discussion sessions. Six groups were formed, according to customer classification: federal agencies, state governments, businesses, academics, associations, and individuals. These segments represented a wide range of users—from other federal users (Department of Transportation, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service) to Boy and Girl Scout troop leaders and K-12th grade educators.

The groups had a list of five issues to discuss: map content, map revision, media preferences, map availability, and map-on-demand technology. In addition, they were asked to rank five factors that would help USGS in revising maps: accuracy, detail, content, completeness, and consistency. The workshop closed with a report session in which each group summarized its views.

Most participants value the current maps, though each customer segment expressed different perspectives concerning the future of the topographic mapping program. Participants also showed interest in technological advances in revising maps and in printing maps on request.

The workshop was an excellent outreach opportunity. All the users felt good about being asked to participate and provide their opinions. It also was a first step toward identifying key topographic map users within each of the customer groups and demonstrated that the USGS is committed to considering customer needs in program planning. Based on the success of the first get-together, a second workshop will be held this summer at the USGS Rocky Mountain Mapping Center in Denver. A report of the first workshop will be available through the Mapping page of the USGS home page in several weeks.

Designing a Great Lakes Geologic Mapping Partnership

Wayne Newell, Peter Lyttle, and John Pallister, USGS, and Brian Keith, Indiana Geological Survey

GROUND WATER RESOURCES

Above, Norm Hester, right, Indiana State Geologist, and organizer of the Great Lakes Geologic Mapping Forum, and Doug Wilcox, left, USGS biologist, discuss the future of cooperative geologic mapping in the Great Lakes states. At left, Harrison "Jack" Schmidt, a geologist and former Apollo astronaut and U.S. Senator, addresses the Great Lakes Geologic Mapping Forum on risk assessment in geologic mapping.

The primary ground-water resource of the Great Lakes states, a key to the area's future, is the region's unconsolidated glacial sediments — a ubiquitours cover of sand and gravel, silt and clay that extends hundreds of feet below the Earth's surface.

However, hazardous wastes, animal wastes, chemicals, and other contaminants from the region's large population and extensive manufacturing and agricultural industries threaten this natural resource, posing a major challenge to planners and decision-makers.

The first steps in a new long-range partnership between the USGS and the State Geological Surveys of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan to better understand and protect this critical resource were taken in Indianapolis, Indiana, during a March 24 and 25 conference.

The focus of the *Great Lakes Geologic Mapping Forum* was understanding the value of the area's geologic framework for assessing the environmental and economic problems of the region. The conference was designed by the State Geological Surveys and the USGS National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program to listen to the concerns and needs of policy-makers, land-use planners, regulators, and educators from local, state, and federal levels.

More than 170 representatives from 90 regulatory and planning agencies, private industries, and universities attended. Many participated in panel discussions on ground-water protection and modeling, geologic hazards such as coastal erosion, flood plain management, and seismic risk, and a variety of land-use issues ranging from wetlands delineation to mineral extraction.

An early consensus was reached that an understanding of the stratigraphic and hydrologic framework of the glacial sediments was necessary for ecologically and financially sound land-use planning and resource management. The framework of glacial deposits can only be defined through detailed 3-D geologic mapping. (Three dimensional seismic techniques enable scientists to map deep underground geologic features.)

Recurring themes heard in the ten hours of public discussion focused on the need for unbiased, reliable scientific information contained in basic geologic maps; improved outreach to educate the users of these maps; water issues such as contamination of sole source aquifers and understanding ground water flow paths, and threats to human and wildlife health. It was also repeatedly stated that adequate cost-benefit and risk-analysis studies need to be incorporated into any long-range plans.

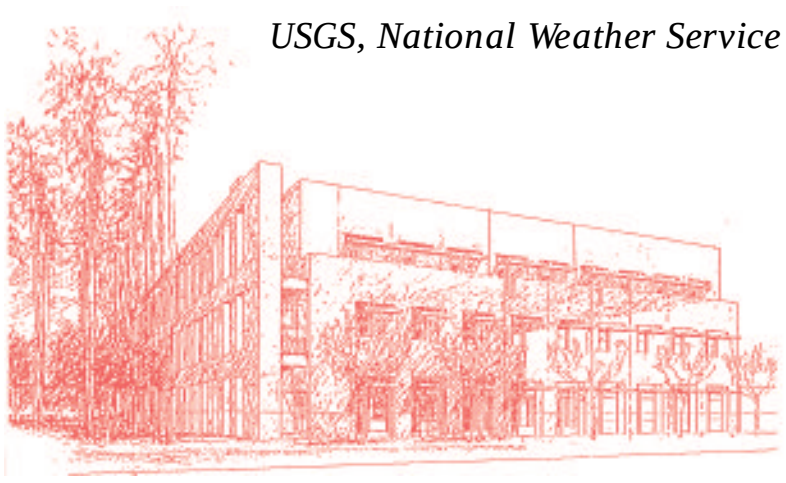
At the end of the first day, **Harrison "Jack" Schmidt**, a former geologist, Apollo astronaut, and U.S. Senator, addressed the forum on the need for geologic surface mapping to develop sound standards for risk assessment and risk analysis.

On the second day of the forum, a working group of 24 geologists and managers from the USGS and the four State Geological Surveys began the work of planning funding, staffing, technological needs and outreach for the partnership. It was immediately recognized that some staff from each of the Surveys will need to be reassigned, and perhaps retrained, over the next few years to make any long-range surface mapping plan succeed.

To get this effort off to a good start, the USGS is offering a workshop in Reston, Virginia, and a field course in the midwest during May to train USGS and State geologists in the appropriate surface mapping techniques.

Teaming Up in Tucson

USGS, National Weather Service join forces on University of Arizona campus



The USGS and the National Weather Service offices in Tucson, Arizona, have moved into the new Environment and Natural Resources Building on the University of Arizona campus. Federal funding for the building was secured in 1992 with the assistance of U.S. **Senator Dennis DeConcini**.

Locating these agencies in the same building will foster opportunities for joint scientific research, encourage the integration of science activities among the agencies and the university, and provide unique opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to work with professionals from both agencies.

An example of such beneficial interaction is the USGS's operation of more than 200 rainfall and streamflow gages in Arizona. The system is a critical part of the weather and flood forecasting operations of the National Weather Service. The atmospheric sciences and hydrology departments at the university are also involved in research to improve weather and flood forecasts.

Tying the knot of a new partnership are, from left, Nick Melcher, District Chief, Water Resources Division and USGS State Representative, Arizona; Gordon Eaton, Director, USGS; Michael J. Cusanovich, University of Arizona vice president for research and graduate studies; Mike Caporaso, Arizona Department of Water Resources; Susan Zevin, deputy assistant administrator for operations, National Weather Service; and Marc Shogren, meteorologist in charge of National Weather Service, Tucson. Photo by John Florence, University of Arizona, Lo Que Paso Staff and Faculty News. Above is an artists sketch of the Environment and Natural Resources Building on the University of Arizona campus.

The USGS in Tucson has also developed new visualization and modeling techniques which have improved capabilities for "seeing through" the earth's surface and aiding the search for ground-water resources. These studies are conducted jointly with the Department of Defense and the Arizona Department of Water Resources.

The building was dedicated on March 21. Director Eaton and E.L. (Joe) Friday, chief of the National Weather Service, spoke at the ceremony, which was followed by an open house.